



Town of *Westford* Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

January 2014



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

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Green Communities
Celebration
February 10th, 10:00 am
Town Hall

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Dear Westford residents,

At their meeting on January 14th, the Board of Selectmen thanked the Fire Department for its response to the recent 4 alarm house fire on Beaver Brook Road. Both our firefighters and our police dispatchers immediately set up fundraising efforts to help the family impacted by the event, and they presented checks totaling over \$30,000 to the family who were present at the meeting.

It is with great pleasure that I announce the appointment of Westford's new Fire Chief, Joe Targ. Chief Targ has been a member of the Westford Fire Department for many years. Chief Targ joined the auxiliary fire service as a teenager in the 1970s and became a firefighter on the Westford Fire Department in 1981, becoming full time in 1987. He is a lifelong Westford resident, and was named Interim Fire Chief last July. There were 65 applicants for the position, but the unanimous recommendation of the search committee was that Joe Targ be offered the position. Please join me in congratulating Fire Chief Targ and wishing him the very best in his new position. I am also pleased to announce Chief Targ received accreditation as a Fire Chief from the Fire Service Commission on January 6, 2014.



Fire Chief Joe Targ

Continuing with positive news, our Fire Department recently received a \$4,686 grant for Fiscal Year 2014 Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and \$3,018 for Senior Awareness of Fire Education.

Our Police Department is also celebrating success! Police Officer Mike Breault received AAA's "Traffic Safety Hero Award" for his efforts in traffic safety. Officer Breault was very active with the enforcement grants - such as cross walk enforcement and with the "click it and ticket" program. The AAA also recognized our entire Police Department and presented us with an award which reads: "In recognition of your outstanding achievement in traffic safety and your continuing efforts to educate and protect the citizens of your community. AAA salutes your commitment to traffic safety". Congratulations to Officer Breault and our entire Police Department on this recognition.



*Officer Mike Breault enforcing
pedestrian safety.*

(courtesy of the Lowell Sun)

(continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

I am delighted to announce that Westford recently received designation as a "Green Community" after much work by the Energy Committee and Assistant Town Manager, John Mangiaratti. Along with this designation, the town was awarded a \$156K grant to be used for energy efficient projects. On February 10th at 10:00 a.m. in the Town Hall, Westford will be hosting a Green Communities celebration ceremony with the towns of Ashby and Lunenburg. Please stay tuned for more details.

The Board of Selectmen is seeking residents interested in being appointed to a new "Hunting Policy Committee". Information is available on our website and interested residents should complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link, or in the town manager's office: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

The town is continuing to accept comments on the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) draft Study of Town Center Parking. Many concerns were raised about parking, traffic through the center, and the impacts to our town common and surrounding streets. The Board of Selectmen is seeking public input on the report before asking NMCOG to finalize the report, and make decisions regarding moving forward with their recommendations. You may find the report at this link: [NMCOG Town Center Parking/Traffic Report](#). The project will be discussed at the Selectmen's January 28th meeting.

The East Boston Camps and Stepinski Parcels Naming Study Committee has mailed surveys to each resident to seek input on whether or not the name of these parcels should be changed. Please complete the survey if you would like to contribute your opinions to this committee's work.

Many of you may have experienced delays in your recycling pick-up during the first week in January. Please know we have communicated our dissatisfaction with the recycling company and we are working with the Recycling Commission on an action plan to ensure this does not occur again.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross



Sharpshinned hawk (L) recently was rescued by our Animal Control Officer, Jaime Berry with assistance from Westford Fire Department.

The hawk was trapped in the window alcove above the Starbucks Coffee entrance.

The hawk was uninjured and released back to its habitat.



Council On Aging - Coming Events

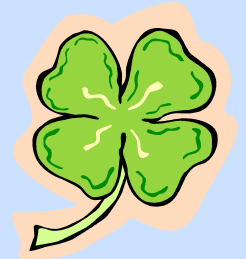
VALENTINE'S DAY MAKE YOUR OWN SUNDAE

Come to the Cameron Senior Center to make your own sundae on Friday, February 14th from 12:30 - 1:30 PM
Please sign up by calling the front desk at 978-692-5523.



ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCHEON

Wear your green and come join us for our Annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon! Tuesday, March 11th at the Franco American Club.
Doors will open at 10:30AM
Traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner served around 11:30 AM.
Reserve your seat by March 5th by calling 978-692-5523.
The \$7 fee is due at the time of registration.
Non-resident fee is \$15.
You will not be registered until payment is received.



LUNCH SERVED ON WEEKDAYS AT CAMERON SENIOR CENTER

The Merrimack Valley Nutrition Program provides anyone age 60 and over with low cost nutritional meals at Cameron, Monday – Friday at 11:30 AM.
Please call 978-692-5523 a minimum of two days in advance between 8:00 - 10:00 AM to make your reservation.
The donation is \$2.00. If spouse/partner is under the age of 60, the meal cost is \$4.50.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels clients are now offered a choice of five special diets. Along with the traditional Meals, a special diet with a doctor's authorization is available. Let us assist you Monday through Friday by delivering meals to your door around noontime.
Call 1-800-892-0890 to register.



To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website at:
www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center
L.C. Thurston

Planning Department News

Announcing a Public Meeting to review proposed changes to the Zoning Bylaw:

Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Millennium School, All Purpose Room, 23 Depot Street

Attend this meeting to learn about the proposed Medical Marijuana Overlay District (MMOD) to regulate Registered Marijuana Dispensaries. Although there are no applications for a Registered Marijuana Dispensary in Westford, the Town must provide for them in our Zoning Bylaw. A committee of residents and Town safety officials developed the draft MMOD Zoning Bylaw this winter. Town Planning staff will also present minor changes to the Floodplain Overlay District section of the Zoning Bylaw in order to reference 2014 Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

Planning Board hearings on these items begin

February 3, 2014 at approximately 7:45 p.m.

For more information about the changes, contact:

Town Planner Jeff Morrisette at 978-692-5524

or jmorrisette@westfordma.gov

Water Department News

Clearing Fire Hydrants

The folks at the Water Department would like to express our sincere gratitude to the people of Westford who've been clearing their local fire hydrants during recent snow storms. We are very pleased (but not surprised!) with the amount of help we've been receiving during an already active winter season. With over 1,000 hydrants in town any help we can get from our customers is truly appreciated - especially considering the significant amount of snow we've already experienced. Our crews start digging out the hydrants as soon as each storm ends - but without your help we would have a hard time getting all of them cleared in a timely fashion.



Thanks for the outstanding job Westford!

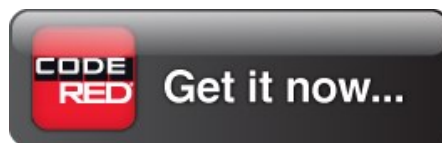


CodeRED is a Community Messaging System, used to notify residences of emergency, non-emergency and general information through an automated telephone dialing system, which sends a message automatically to thousands of targeted residences and/or contact databases.

Most residents will not need to take action in order to receive notification of events on their home telephone. However, **if you have recently moved into Westford, changed your home phone number, or have an unlisted phone number you will need to register your phone number.**

[Click here](#) to register additional phone numbers or email addresses.

Click the icon below to download the CodeRED Mobile Alert App for your smartphone.



Westford Recycling Commission News

The Westford Recycling Commission asks: Want to do something about tax expenditures for trash?

One thing every household can do immediately is throw out less trash and RECYCLE and COMPOST to the MAX.

How would this help reduce tax expenditures?

- Your tax dollars pay **\$616,678** to collect trash in FY 2014.
- OVER and ABOVE the cost of annual trash collection, Westford is charged approximately **\$70** for every ton of the **7,900** tons of our trash that goes to the incinerator.
- That's another **\$553,000** your tax dollars pay.
- Your tax dollars pay **\$244,800** to collect recyclables in FY 2014.
- There is NO additional taxpayer cost collecting tons more recyclables.
- There are NO LIMITS to how much you can recycle.

The Bottom Line

- The more that gets recycled or composted and eliminated from trash, the less it costs.
- The Town could save **\$55,300** per year by reducing trash tonnage by **10%**.
That amounts to every household lowering trash by only **4** pounds a week!

Recycling is Easy

- ***No sorting of recyclables!*** Throw all recyclables in the same container and put it out with your trash on the days recycling is scheduled for pick up.
- Recycle plastic bottles (including caps and labels) with a recycling symbol #1-7 (except Styrofoam), glass bottles (clear or colored), cans, aluminum foil (including aluminum plates and pans), paper, cardboard (flattened, 3x3 ft. max), pizza boxes (no pizza!).
- You can use a regular recycling toter or bin, or any barrel for recyclables. Pick up a free "Recycle" sticker at the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall for your barrel.
- To purchase your own wheeled 64-gallon recycling toter, send a check for \$45 to the Recycling Commission, 55 Main Street, and you will be contacted for pickup.
- Recycling is mandated in Westford. If you do not recycle on your recycling day, your trash will not be picked up. Leave your recycling bin/toter out until the trash collector has gone by.

What else can you do to decrease your trash?

Reduce what you throw in the trash by composting your non-meat food scraps.

To purchase an Earth Machine composter at a discounted price of \$45, contact recycling volunteer Denise at 978-692-6986.

Questions?

Find answers to your recycling questions at www.westfordma.gov/recycling, recycling@westfordma.gov or call a volunteer on the Commission:

Ellen 978-692-2039 ■ Sue 978-692-1027 ■ Kris 978-692-2887 ■ Alan 978-692-1105
Barbara 978-692-5177 ■ Charles 617-251-7216 ■ Cynthia 978-692-5462

The Westford Recycling Commission thanks you for recycling, reducing, and reusing!



J.V. Fletcher Library Presents

Yet Another Great Service Initiative with an Absurb Name!

ZINIO!

We've introduced you to [Boopsie](#) and [IndieFlix](#) and Wowbrary and [Tumblebooks](#) and Playaways and now we unveil our latest downloadable digital phenomena: Zinio. Westford cardholders will be able to download (to computers, tablets, smart phones, etc.) **DIGITAL ISSUES OF MAGAZINES!!** Smithsonian, Us Weekly, Bloomberg Business News, Vegetarian Times, MacWorld, Men's Health and more. You'll find magazines that cover food, entertainment, electronics, arts and crafts, politics, business and more. You will have the option to choose from over fifty magazines of today's most popular magazines. Once an issue is downloaded, it's yours to keep. There are no waiting lists, and you can download as many magazines as you want. The magazines will be formatted to fit your smart device's screen. Selected back issues are also available for download. This exciting new service will be launched the last week of January! Call Information Services at the Library if you have any questions! (978) 692-5555



Health Department News

February is American Heart Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women, but heart disease is preventable and controllable. Every year, about 715,000 Americans have a heart attack. About 600,000 people die from heart disease in the United States each year and is the leading cause of death for both men and women.¹

The five major symptoms of a heart attack are

- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck, or back.
- Feeling weak, light-headed, or faint.
- Chest pain or discomfort.
- Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder.
- Shortness of breath.



If you think that you or someone you know is having a heart attack, call 9–1–1 immediately.

The term “heart disease” refers to several types of heart conditions. The most common type in the United States is coronary heart disease (also called coronary artery disease), which occurs when a substance called plaque builds up in the arteries that supply blood to the heart. Coronary heart disease can cause heart attack, angina, heart failure, and arrhythmias. Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, costs the United States \$312.6 billion each year.¹ This total includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity. These conditions also are leading causes of disability, preventing Americans from working and enjoying family activities. The situation is alarming, but there is good news—heart disease is preventable and controllable. We can start by taking small steps every day to bring our loved ones and ourselves closer to heart health. CDC is providing a tip a day throughout February, but you can take these small steps all year long.

One Step at a Time. As you begin your journey to better heart health, keep these things in mind:

- **Don't become overwhelmed.** Every step brings you closer to a healthier heart.
- **Don't go it alone.** The journey is more fun when you have company. Ask friends and family to join you.
- **Don't get discouraged.** You may not be able to take all of the steps at one time. Get a good night's sleep and do what you can tomorrow.

Reward yourself. Find fun things to do to decrease your stress. Round up some colleagues for a lunchtime walk, join a singing group, or have a healthy dinner with your family or friends.

Plan for Prevention. Some health conditions and lifestyle factors can put people at a higher risk for developing heart disease. You can help prevent heart disease by making healthy choices and managing any medical conditions you may have.

Eat a healthy diet. Choosing healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables—adults should have at least 5 servings each day. Eating foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high cholesterol. Limiting [salt or sodium](#) in your diet also can lower your blood pressure. For more information on healthy diet and nutrition, visit [CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Website](#) and [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#).

Health Department News (Continued)

Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the [body mass index](#) (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's body fat. If you know your weight and height, you can calculate your BMI at [CDC's Assessing Your Weight Website](#).

Exercise regularly. Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. For more information, see [CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Website](#).

Monitor your blood pressure. High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis. You can check your blood pressure at home, at a pharmacy, or at a doctor's office. Find more information at [CDC's High Blood Pressure Website](#). You can also have your Blood Pressure taken at the office by appointment. Call at 978 692-5509 or at Cameron Senior Center the second Tuesday of each month from 9:30-10:30.

Don't smoke. Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quit as soon as possible. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit. For more information about tobacco use and quitting, see [CDC's Smoking & Tobacco Use Website](#) and [Smokefree.gov](#).

Limit alcohol use. Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which can increase your blood pressure. Men should stick to no more than two drinks per day, and women to no more than one. For more information, visit [CDC's Alcohol and Public Health Website](#).

Have your cholesterol checked. Your health care provider should test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years. Talk with your doctor about this simple blood test. You can find out more from [CDC's High Cholesterol Website](#). The Health Department has a screening on Friday March 21st from 8:30-12:00 by appointment. Call 978- 692-5509 to book.

Manage your diabetes. If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels closely, and talk with your doctor about treatment options. Visit [CDC's Diabetes Public Health Resource](#) for more information.

Take your medicine. If you're taking medication to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something.

For more ideas about simple steps to take every day for better heart health, visit the [full page of tips](#). You can also follow the [Million Hearts](#)™ initiative on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for even more ways to protect your heart and live a longer, healthier life. Million Hearts™ is a national initiative to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes in the United States by 2017. Together, we can prevent heart disease, one step at a time.

**For additional information or resources to help you get started,
please contact the Health Department at 978 692-5509**

¹ Reference: Go AS, Mozaffarian D, Roger VL, Benjamin EJ, Berry JD, Borden WB, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics —2013 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2013;127(1):e6-e245.

Health Department News (Continued)

FLU OUTBREAKS WIDESPREAD IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO VACCINATE!

According to the CDC, overall flu activity continues to be high in the United States with activity continuing to spread to other states. Thirty-five states are now experiencing widespread activity and twenty states are reporting high levels of influenza-like illness (ILI). H1N1 viruses continue to predominate across the country. Anyone aged 6 months and older who has not gotten a flu vaccine yet this season should get one now. All flu vaccines are designed to protect against H1N1 viruses.

Please note that although public clinics are now over we continue to vaccinate by appointment. Call 978 692-5509 to book.

Stopping the Spread of Germs at Home, Work & School

1. Get Vaccinated

2. Practice Good Health Habits

- **Avoid close contact.**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

- **Stay home when you are sick.**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

- **Cover your mouth and nose.**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

⇒ [Cover Your Cough](#)

Stop the Spread of Germs that makes you and others sick.

- **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

⇒ [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

Tips on hand washing and using alcohol-based hand sanitizers

- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, eyes or nose.

- **Stop the Spread of Germs**

Healthy habits can protect everyone from getting germs or spreading germs at home, work, or school.

- **Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.**

Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu can help slow the spread of influenza.



Health Department News (Continued)

Get Rid Of Those Needles Safely!

The Westford Health Dept. would like to remind residents and encourage parents of children with EpiPens and diabetes of Westford's proper sharps collection services. In compliance with Massachusetts state law, residents are not to dispose of used human or pet sharps into curbside trash collection. The Health Dept. will collect used sharps (EpiPens, syringes, lancets, etc.) from Westford residents only. Collection sites are located at the 2nd floor of Town Hall (M-F 8am-4pm) and at the 24/7 kiosk located in the Police Dept. entryway. All materials must be delivered in a sharps or puncture resistant container (such as an empty laundry detergent bottle, soda bottle, or coffee can). Do NOT bring in loose needles, glass containers or sharps in a bag. Please try to fill the container before bringing it for drop off. NO commercial businesses may use this service. Please call 978-692-5509 if you have any questions.

Presentation on Title V and Wells for Realtors

The Westford Health Department we will be presenting a Question & Answer session directed towards helping realtors navigate 310 CMR 15.000 The State Environmental Code (commonly referred to as "Title V"). Information covered will include septic system permits, building permits, and Title V Septic System Inspections for transfer. In addition there will be a discussion on Westford's newly revised Well Water Regulations and other well water basics such as testing parameters, recommended frequency, and requirements for occupancy.

TO REGISTER: Please register either by calling the Health Department office at **(978) 692-5509**, or email the administrative assistant at: llessard@westfordma.gov

Date:	Tuesday February 25th, 2014
Time:	10:00 AM to Noon
Location:	Town Hall, Upstairs Meeting Room (#201)
Address:	55 Main Street, Westford MA 01886

Health Department News (Continued)

L'il iguana Live! Safety Show

Families were recently encouraged to bring their children to Blanchard Middle School for an interactive program about safety co- sponsored by the Health Department and Circle Health. The Lil' iguana's Children's Safety Foundation offered kid-friendly advice on childhood safety and well-being through dance, storytelling, music, and role playing. The show reinforced messages such as "Street Smarts," "Wear the Gear," "Get Permission", "Take a Buddy with You," "Who is a Stranger" and "Run, Yell and Tell."



The Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps (UMVMRC) provided hand-outs so children could review many of these concepts with their parents at home. The Police Department and Fire Department also provided safety materials.

